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Rep. Stuck Statement on Republican Rejection of Bill to Close “Dark Store Loophole” while Approving Developer Omnibus Bill

MADISON – The Wisconsin State Assembly this afternoon rejected taking up legislation to close the “Dark Store Loophole” while approving a bill which will reduce public input on local zoning issues, increasing local and state government costs when condemnations occur for public project, and increasing payments to developers at the expense of homeowners.

“I am disappointed that the majority in the State Assembly refused to take up Assembly Bill 386 this afternoon which would have closed the “Dark Store Loophole” in Wisconsin. Despite this bill being authored by a bi-partisan group of 52 Representatives 17 Senators, a majority in both houses, leadership in the Assembly and the Senate have killed this bill which protects local homeowners and small businesses in communities across the state. This continued existence of this loophole costs local governments millions in back taxes and legal fees, while passing the tax burden on to small businesses and homeowners, with an estimated \$120 increase in taxes for landowners in the City of Appleton alone.”

“At the same time, the Republican majority passed AB 770, the Developer Omnibus Bill which will increase the costs for local governments to operate. Requiring local governments to take into consideration additional factors like income appraisals when compensating a business for a condemnation, but those same corporations don’t have that counted when it comes to property tax assessments.”

“The Developer Bill also takes refunds for unspent impact fees away from homeowners who buy properties in a new development and gives it instead to the developer of the project, even if they no longer have an ownership stake in the development. Lastly, this bill eliminates the ability of residents and property owners to protest local zoning amendments due to their impact on their properties, their homes, and their community.”

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